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## B. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously amended) A method of tracking surplus reduction actions, said method comprising:  
receiving a surplus reduction action from a user, wherein the user is an employee and wherein the surplus reduction action includes a surplus acknowledgment;  
identifying a user identifier corresponding to the user;  
storing the user identifier and data corresponding to the surplus reduction action in a nonvolatile storage area; and  
providing benefits data to the employee in response to receiving the employee's surplus acknowledgement.
2. (Original) The method as described in claim 1 further comprising:  
receiving a digital signature from the user;  
authenticating the digital signature; and  
storing the digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Previously amended) The method as described in claim 1 further comprising:  
sending the employee a non-compete agreement;  
receiving a digital signature from the employee  
corresponding to the non-compete agreement; and  
storing the employee's digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
5. (Original) The method as described in claim 4 further comprising:

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identifying one or more surplus employees that have confidential knowledge of an organization; and writing a non-compete indicator to a non-compete data storage area corresponding to the identified surplus employees, wherein the non-compete agreement is sent to surplus employees in response to the identification.

6. (Original) The method as described in claim 5 further comprising:  
selecting the group of identified surplus employees;  
analyzing digital signatures received from one or more of the identified surplus employees;  
determining based on the analysis which of the identified surplus employees have not provided digital signatures in response to non-compete agreements; and  
sending a reminder notification to the determined group of surplus employees.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Previously amended) An information handling system comprising:  
one or more processors;  
a memory accessible by the processors;  
a nonvolatile storage area accessible by the processors;  
a tracking tool for tracking surplus reduction actions, the tracking tool including:  
means for receiving a surplus reduction action from a user, wherein the user is an employee and wherein the surplus reduction action includes a surplus acknowledgment;

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means for identifying a user identifier corresponding to the user;

means for storing the user identifier and data corresponding to the surplus reduction action in the nonvolatile storage area; and

means for providing benefits data to the employee in response to receiving the employee's surplus acknowledgement.

9. (Original) The information handling system as described in claim 8 further comprising:

means for receiving a digital signature from the user;

means for authenticating the digital signature; and

means for storing the digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously amended) The information handling system as described in claim 9 further comprising:

means for sending the employee a non-compete agreement;

means for receiving a digital signature from the employee corresponding to the non-compete agreement; and

means for storing the employee's digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.

12. (Original) The information handling system as described in claim 11 further comprising:

means for identifying one or more surplus employees that have confidential knowledge of an organization; and

means for writing a non-compete indicator to a non-compete data storage area corresponding to the identified surplus employees, wherein the non-compete agreement

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is sent to surplus employees in response to the identification.

13. (Original) The information handling system as described in claim 12 further comprising:  
means for selecting the group of identified surplus employees;  
means for analyzing digital signatures received from one or more of the identified surplus employees;  
means for determining based on the analysis which of the identified surplus employees have not provided digital signatures in response to non-compete agreements; and  
means for sending a reminder notification to the determined group of surplus employees.
14. (Previously amended) A computer program product stored in a computer operable media for tracking surplus reduction actions, said computer program product comprising:  
means for receiving a surplus reduction action from a user, wherein the user is an employee and wherein the surplus reduction action includes a surplus acknowledgment;  
means for identifying a user identifier corresponding to the user;  
means for storing the user identifier and data corresponding to the surplus reduction action in the nonvolatile storage area; and  
means for providing benefits data to the employee in response to receiving the employee's surplus acknowledgement.

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15. (Original) The computer program product as described in claim 14 further comprising:  
means for receiving a digital signature from the user;  
means for authenticating the digital signature; and  
means for storing the digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
16. (Cancelled)
17. (Previously amended) The computer program product as described in claim 14 further comprising:  
means for sending the employee a non-compete agreement;  
means for receiving a digital signature from the employee corresponding to the non-compete agreement; and  
means for storing the employee's digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
18. (Original) The computer program product as described in claim 17 further comprising:  
means for identifying one or more surplus employees that have confidential knowledge of an organization; and  
means for writing a non-compete indicator to a non-compete data storage area corresponding to the identified surplus employees, wherein the non-compete agreement is sent to surplus employees in response to the identification.
19. (Original) The computer program product as described in claim 18 further comprising:  
means for selecting the group of identified surplus employees;  
means for analyzing digital signatures received from one or more of the identified surplus employees;

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means for determining based on the analysis which of the identified surplus employees have not provided digital signatures in response to non-compete agreements; and means for sending a reminder notification to the determined group of surplus employees.

20. (Cancelled)

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